

We claim:

1. A method of performing work on a communication system in accordance with a work assignment, comprising:
 - a) identifying at least one data file associated with the work assignment, the data file including subscription information and network location information;
 - b) preparing at least a first set of test parameters for performing a network test, the first set of parameters based on, at least in part, the subscription information and the network location information;
 - c) communicating the test parameters to a test device; and
 - d) employing the test device to perform a first test using the first set of test parameters.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the subscription information includes information identifying one or more optional program services in a television broadcast system.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein step b) further comprises preparing the first set of test parameters such that the first set of test parameters include information identifying one or more channel frequencies to be tested.
4. The method of claim 3, wherein step b) further comprises preparing the first set of test parameters such that the first set of test parameters include at least one pass/fail parameter associated with at least one of the channel frequencies to be tested.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein step b) further comprises preparing the first set of test parameters such that the first set of test parameters include at least one pass/fail parameter.

6. The method of claim 3, wherein step b) further comprises preparing the information identifying the number of channel frequencies to be tested based on the network location information.

7. The method of claim 3, wherein step b) further comprises preparing the first set of test parameters such that the first set of test parameters include at least one test type parameter associated with the channel of frequencies to be tested.

8. The method of claim 7 wherein the at least one test type parameter includes an analog channel test type.

9. The method of claim 7 wherein the at least one test type parameter includes a digital channel test type.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein step c) further comprises communicating the first set of test parameters using a cable modem.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein step c) further comprises communicating the first set of test parameters using a wireless communication medium.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein step c) further comprises communicating the first first set of test parameters using the wireless communication medium and an internetwork.

13. A central control system for use in a testing system that employs one or more remote test units, the central control system comprising:

a central controller operable to identify at least one data file associated with the work assignment, the data file including subscription information, and network location information, the central controller further operable to prepare at least a first set of test parameters for performing a network test, the first set of parameters based on, at least in part, the subscription information and the network location information, and

a communication circuit operable to communicate the first set of test parameters to a remote test device.

14. The central control system of claim 13 further comprising a subscriber data base, and wherein the central controller is further operable to identify the data file within the subscriber data base.

15. The central control system of claim 13, wherein the subscription information includes information identifying one or more optional program services in a television broadcast system.

16. The central control system of claim 13, wherein the central controller is further operable to prepare the first set of test parameters such that the first set of test parameters include information identifying one or more channel frequencies to be tested.

17. The central control system of claim 16, wherein the central controller is further operable to prepare the first set of test parameters such that the first set of test parameters include at least one pass/fail parameter associated with at least one of the channel frequencies to be tested.

18. The central control system of claim 16, wherein the central controller is further operable to prepare the information identifying the number of channel frequencies to be tested based on the network location information.

19. The central control system of claim 16, wherein the central controller is further operable to prepare the first set of test parameters such that the first set of test parameters include at least one test type parameter associated with the number of channel of frequencies to be tested.

20. A test meter for use in testing a communication system, the test meter comprising:

- a) a communication circuit operable to communicate with a central control system;
- b) a measurement circuit operable to obtain measurements from the communication system;
- c) a controller operably coupled to the communication circuit, the controller operable to
 - communicate information corresponding to at least one data file to the central control system via the communication circuit, the data file including network address information and subscription information;
 - receive a first set of test parameters from the head end controller, the first set of

test parameters based on the network address information and subscription information cause the measurement device to perform a first test based on the first set of test parameters.

21. The test meter of claim 20 wherein the controller is further operable to communicate information corresponding to a data file as a work assignment that is associated with the data file.

22. The test meter of claim 20 wherein the controller is further operable to communicate information corresponding to a data file as a location identifier.

23. The test meter of claim 22, further comprising a GPS receiver operable coupled to the controller, and wherein the controller is further operable to generate the location identifier based on information obtained through the GPS receiver.

24. The test meter of claim 22, further comprising a user interface, and wherein the controller is further operable to generate the location identifier based on information received from a user via the user interface.

25. The test meter of claim 20, wherein the controller is further operable to receive the first set of test parameters from the head end controller, the first set of test parameter including information identifying one or more channel frequencies to be tested.

26. The test meter of claim 25, wherein the controller is further operable to receive the first set of test parameters from the head end controller, the first set of test parameter including information identifying at least one test type corresponding to the one or more channel frequencies to be tested.

27. The test meter of claim 20, wherein the communication circuit comprises a cable modem.

28. The test meter of claim 20, wherein the communication circuit is operable to communicate with the head end controller using, at least in part, an internetwork.

29. The test meter of claim 20, wherein the communication circuit includes a wireless communication device.